



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/846/Part I/2
11 August 1995

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-sixth session

UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS:
REPORT FOR 1994-1995 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND
BUDGET FOR 1996

PART I. AFRICA

Section 2 - Benin

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

I.2 BENIN

1. Beneficiary population

1. The refugee population in Benin, numbering 156,000 at 1 January 1994, has declined substantially since then, and by 31 December 1994 only 70,400 refugees remained, including about 70,000 Togolese located in the provinces of Mono, Atlantique, Zou and Ouémé and in Cotonou.

2. The other refugees are from various countries -- Zaire, Cameroon, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Liberia, Algeria, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Niger.

3. Most of the refugees are children under the age of 18, who account for 55 per cent, with women and adult men accounting for only 27 per cent and 18 per cent respectively.

4. The refugee population receiving UNHCR regular programme assistance also decreased sharply during the period covered by the report. The number of refugees assisted by UNHCR fell from 116,300 at 31 December 1993 to 50,500 at 31 December 1994 and 48,900 at 31 March 1995.

5. Whereas the number of Togolese refugees receiving assistance is declining with the spontaneous return of many refugees to Togo, that of refugees of various other nationalities is steadily increasing.

2. Developments in 1994 and 1995

6. During the period covered by the report some 100,000 Togolese refugees returned to their country of their own accord, encouraged by the reforms (legislative elections, amnesty law) introduced by the Togolese authorities. If this trend persists, most of the Togolese refugees in Benin may be repatriated within a reasonable period of time in 1995.

7. This promising trend towards repatriation prompted UNHCR to enter into consultations as from the beginning of 1995 with all the parties concerned on ways and means of creating favourable conditions for the repatriation of the Togolese refugees. It is with this in mind that UNHCR has submitted a preliminary draft agreement on the voluntary repatriation of refugees to the Beninese authorities for consideration.

8. Because of the semi-urban background of most of the refugees residing in Benin, particular emphasis has been placed there on income-generating activities, health care coverage of the refugees, school enrolment for school-age children and the supply of staple items. The approved 1994 budget allocation for the project covered not only the major programme components, but also legal protection activities and two studies, one on refugee household budget structure and consumption and the other on medical protection for refugees.

9. The follow-up of programme activities in Benin was ensured through the strengthening of UNHCR staff in Cotonou and in Lokossa, where an office has been set up.

3. 1996 Country programmes

(a) Objectives

10. As in 1994 and 1995, UNHCR efforts in 1996 will be focused on seeking lasting solutions to the problems of the Togolese refugees in Benin while not neglecting the other refugees residing in the country.

(i) Togolese refugees

11. With the significant spontaneous movements of refugees returning voluntarily in 1994 and 1995, the UNHCR Branch Office in Benin is anticipating a continuation and increase of organized voluntary returns in 1996 as a result of the favourable environment in Togo in the aftermath of the proclamation of the general amnesty in December 1994. This new environment together with the efforts of all parties concerned may facilitate the voluntary repatriation of up to 30,000 refugees in the course of 1995. Various consultations will be organized to this end in 1995. The implementation of a reintegration programme in the areas of return might speed up the process. These efforts will be maintained in 1996 to facilitate the repatriation of Togolese refugees wishing to return.

12. Along with the lasting solutions that UNHCR will be seeking for the Togolese refugees in Benin, specific assistance programmes will be implemented for vulnerable refugees and those that may not yet have opted for voluntary repatriation.

13. A substantial part of the general programme will be devoted to the promotion of micro projects, community services for women and children, vocational training for young people and health care for needy refugees. Additional food assistance for any refugees who have not become self-reliant will be sought from the World Food Programme (WFP).

(ii) Other refugees

14. Despite the amnesty proclaimed in Chad in December 1994, most of the Chadian refugees are clearly not planning to return there before the holding of the general elections initially scheduled for 1995 and then postponed until 1996. In this context, the UNHCR Branch Office in Benin intends to maintain its material assistance to Chadian refugees who have not opted for voluntary repatriation and who are still having difficulty settling in.

15. The number of refugees of various nationalities entering Benin has increased steadily over the past two years. As the economic context is not particularly conducive to employment, increased resources will obviously be needed for the integration of these refugees, who are concentrated around the main urban centres. They will receive material assistance, particularly in the sectors of health, housing and legal protection, under the care and maintenance project.

iii) Resettlement in a third country

16. Refugees for whom settlement in Benin cannot be considered may be proposed for resettlement in a third country. The UNHCR Branch Office in Benin believes the number of refugees in this category could grow in 1996.

(b) Proposed budgets for 1996

17. Operational activities planned for 1996 will be multi-faceted and directed towards consolidating previous years' achievements. In addition to the assistance to be provided directly to the refugees, the allocation will serve to promote further UNHCR activities relating to the protection and rights of refugees, and also to strengthen technical support for operational partner agencies in order to increase their organizational capacity in the implementation of projects. The decrease in the amount of the allocation reflects the trimming of the programme as a result of the spontaneous repatriation of 100,000 refugees between 1993 and 1995. Under the refugee care and maintenance project scheduled for 1996, the allocation will cover identified needs in 14 or more sectors of activity.

18. The allocation for operational activities in 1996 will be earmarked, in order of priority, for primary health care (19.7 per cent), renewal of staple items (14.7 per cent) and primary education, catering for over 10,000 pupils (12.6 per cent).

(c) Implementing partners

19. Despite the massive spontaneous repatriation and the large-scale organized repatriation that may take place in the course of this year, the UNHCR Offices in Lokossa and Cotonou may be expected to remain open in order to monitor the programme to be implemented in 1996 for refugees who have not opted for repatriation. UNHCR will also renew the programme execution agreements with operational partners, which are as follows:

- The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Beninese Red Cross, responsible for food distribution in the province of Ouémé and in the Cotonou and Ouémé accommodation centres, and for the execution of the health programme in the provinces of Ouémé and Atlantique;
- Terre des Hommes, responsible for the health sector in Mono, Zou and the sub-prefecture of Ouidah;
- Caritas-Benin, responsible for the distribution of food and domestic goods in Mono, Atlantique and Zou, and also for the management of income-generating micro-projects;
- The Benin Council for Educational Activities (CAEB), responsible the programme of assistance for school enrolment of refugee pupils;
- The assistance of the National Coordinating Committee of the Togolese Refugees Relief Agency (CNART), representing the Beninese Government, will also be sought for the coordination of the aid mobilized by the international community;
- The Directorate of Social Affairs, the African Jurists' association and the Ministry of the Interior will be responsible, respectively, for the integration of disabled

refugees, the promotion of the principles of international protection and the distribution of new "refugee cards".

(d) **Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs**

20. Variations due to changes in budget parameters are not discussed in the subsequent analysis (Overview of UNHCR Activities - Part I refers).

(i) **1994 expenditure (all sources of funds)**

21. Expenditure for 1994 Programme Delivery and Administrative Support costs was lower than the revised estimates due to the fact that newly created posts were not filled until several months later. Thus, savings were made in staff and staff-related costs like travel, supplies and utilities.

(ii) **Revised 1995 requirements (all sources of fund)**

22. The revised 1995 requirements are higher than the initial estimates mainly due to the creation of two posts for the Field Office, Lokossa. Provision has been made for the purchase of two vehicles and EDP equipment. Non-staff costs will also increase due to expenditures required for security measures at staff members' residences.

(iii) **Initial 1996 requirements (all sources of funds)**

23. The 1996 Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs are slightly lower than in the 1995 revised estimates, as less equipment will have to be purchased.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN BENIN

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1994	1995	1995		
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1994 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION

GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
508.0	—	—	EMERGENCY FUND	—
2,800.0	3,575.5	1,976.5	CARE AND MAINTENANCE	1,017.8
5.1 a/	—	—	RESETTLEMENT	—
686.4	748.5	904.5	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Overview Tables (Part II)	832.5
3,999.5	4,324.0	2,881.0	SUB-TOTAL OPERATIONS	1,850.3
117.7	84.0	132.1	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Overview Tables (Part II)	133.7
4,117.2	4,408.0	3,013.1	TOTAL (1)	1,984.0

SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
39.3	82.4	—	EDUCATION ACCOUNT	—
62.4	—	—	OTHER TRUST FUNDS	—
54.3	42.0	30.0	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT Junior Professional Officer See Overview Tables (Part II)	30.0
156.0	124.4	30.0	TOTAL (2)	30.0

4,273.2	4,532.4	3,043.1	GRAND TOTAL (1+2)	2,014.0
---------	---------	---------	-------------------	---------

a/ obligation incurred against Other Programmes